

Message Text

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PAGE 01 KUALA 01059 280844Z

12

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-07 L-02

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FM AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9143

SECDEF WASHDC

JCS WASHDC

INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L KUALA LUMPUR 1059

NOFORN

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR UK MY SN

SUBJ: MALAYSIAN/UK TALKS ON BRITISH WITHDRAWAL

1. SUMMARY: UK HIGH COMMISSION OFFICER CHARACTERIZED UK-GOM WORKING LEVEL MEETING FEB 19 TO DISCUSS BRITISH TROOP WITHDRAWALS FROM FPDA AREA AS DEVOTED LARGELY TO PRACTICAL MATTERS. MALAYSIANS DID, HOWEVER, RAISE QUESTION OF UK ABILITY TO MAKE GOOD ON FPDA COMMITMENTS. IN REPLY, BRITISH POINTED OUT THAT SHOULD DECISION BE TAKEN THAT TROOPS NECESSARY, BATTALION COULD BE FURNISHED FROM THOSE IN HONG KONG. MALAYSIANS ALSO URGED RETENTION OF NIMRODS AT SINGAPORE BUT RECEIVED NO ENCOURAGEMENT FROM BRITS. ON PRACTICAL SIDE, MALAYSIANS, WHO HAVE BEEN UNCOOPERATIVE WITH
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PAGE 02 KUALA 01059 280844Z

SINGAPORE OVER USE OF TRAINING FACILITIES AND AIR SPACE, CON-

CERNED THAT GOS WILL TAKE OVER SHIP-TO-SHORE RADIO FACILITY UPON WHICH ALL ROYAL MALAYSIAN NAVY COMMUNICATIONS WILL DEPEND AT LEAST UNTIL 1977 AND ALSO CONCERNED ABOUT STORAGE OF SEPCAT NAVAL MISSILES. END SUMMARY.

2. UK DELEGATION, CONSISTING OF COMMODORE PEROWNE FROM MINDEF, BRITISH MILATT AND HEAD OF CHANCERY HERE, MET WITH SENIOR MALAYSIAN WORKING LEVEL OFFICIALS LED BY NEW DEFENSE DEPUTY SECGEN WAN MANSOR FEB 19 TO DISCUSS RESULTS OF UK FORCE REDUCTIONS. MEETING, WHICH LASTED FOR ONLY 1-1/2 HOURS, DEALT LARGELY WITH PRACTICAL MATTERS, ACCORDING TO UK HEAD OF CHANCERY, EXCEPT FOR PHILOSOPHICAL PROBLEM OF BRITISH CAPABILITY AND WILL TO REACT UNDER FPDA WHICH WAS RAISED BY THE MALAYSIANS. BRITISH ANSWERED THAT SHOULD A DECISION BE TAKEN THAT REINFORCEMENTS WERE REQUIRED IN MALAYSIA, THESE WOULD BE PROVIDED FROM CHURKA BATTALIONS IN HONG KONG. WHETHER MALAYSIANS FOUND THIS CONVINCING OR NOT WAS NOT CLEAR.

3. MALAYSIAN OFFICIALS ALSO PRESSED FOR RETENTION OF BRITISH RECONNAISSANCE CAPABILITY (NIMRODS), CONTINUED HIGH LEVEL OF TRAINING EXCHANGES, AND MAINTENANCE OF CURRENT LEVEL OF NAVAL SHIP AND MILITARY AIRCRAFT VISITS. UK REPS SAID GOM DESIRES WOULD BE MADE KNOWN TO LONDON BUT THEY COULD HOLD OUT LITTLE HOPE THAT DECISION REMOVE NIMRODS WOULD BE REVERSED. FURTHERMORE, ABANDONMENT OF GAN WOULD CUT DOWN NUMBER OF RAF FLIGHTS IN THIS AREA BUT THEY WILL TRY AND PROGRAM AT LEAST TWO LONDON-HONG KONG FLIGHTS THROUGH MALAYSIA MONTHLY. NAVAL VISITS CAN PROBABLY BE MAINTAINED AT PRESENT LEVELS.

4. ON PRACTICAL SIDE, MALAYSIANS ARE UNCOMFORTABLE ABOUT TRANSFER OF CONTROL TO SINGAPORE OF RADIO STATION THAT CURRENTLY SUPPLIES ALL WIRELESS SERVICES TO ROYAL MALAYSIAN NAVY SHIPS. ACCORDING TO UK SOURCE, MALAYSIANS SAID THEY WILL NOT HAVE OWN SHORE-TO-SHIP CAPABILITY UNTIL MID-1977 AT EARLIEST WHEN TRANSMITTING AND RECEIVING STATIONS ARE TO BE SET UP AT LUMUT (PERAK) AND CAMERON HIGHLANDS (PAHANG). MALAYSIANS WERE PERSUADED TO TRY AND RESOLVE THIS PROBLEM AT FPDA CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE MEETING NOW SCHEDULED FOR MARCH.

5. ANOTHER PROBLEM ARISES FROM BRITISH STORAGE AND MAINTENANCE
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PAGE 03 KUALA 01059 280844Z

AT THEIR AMMO FACILITY IN SINGAPORE OF THIRTY MALAYSIAN NAVY SEPCAT SURFACE-TO-SURFACE MISSILES. MALAYSIANS HAVE NEITHER REQUISITE MAINTENANCE NOR AIR-CONDITIONED STORAGE READILY AT HAND AND GOS REPORTEDLY WANTS TO BUILD POWER PLANT AND OTHER PROJECTS ON LAND OCCUPIED BY AMMO FACILITY. THIS TOO, IT WAS CONCLUDED, WOULD REQUIRE SOLUTION THROUGH DIRECT GOM-GOS TALKS.

6. UK WILL TURN OVER TO MALAYSIANS CONTROL OF SONAR TARGET IN SOUTH CHINA SEA OUTSIDE MALAYSIAN WATERS WHICH HAS BEEN USED JOINTLY BY FPDA PARTNERS. WHILE ESSENTIALLY PASSIVE, TARGET WILL REQUIRE YEARLY LIFTING AND CLEANING.

7. COMMENT: MALAYSIANS ARE SENSITIVE ON ISSUES RAISED PARAS. 2 AND 3 NOT ONLY BECAUSE THEY DO NOT WANT TO BE DEPENDENT ON THE SINGAPOREANS IN ANY WAY SHOULD THEY NEED TO DEPLOY THEIR FORCES, BUT ALSO BECAUSE THEY THEMSELVES HAVE BEEN LESS THAN RESPONSIVE TO GOS REQUESTS TO UTILIZE MALAYSIAN AIR SPACE AND TRAINING AREAS. FOR EXAMPLE, UK SOURCE REPORTED THAT ONLY LAST WEEK SADF WAS DENIED PERMISSION TO OVERFLY MALAYSIAN AIR SPACE BY COOPERATIVE INTEGRATED AIR DEFENSE SYSTEM (IADS).
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